

Early College Folio

Milestones

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Celebrating Twenty Years of Early College in NYC

A Presentation by Bard Early College
and the Early College Initiative at CUNY

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INTRODUCTION

BY JOHN B. WEINSTEIN, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *EARLY COLLEGE FOLIO*

On June 17th, 2022, a ceremony was held in the auditorium of Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) Queens to commemorate 20 years of public Early College education in New York City. The focus was to bring together, in celebration, the separate collaborations of Bard College and of the City University of New York (CUNY) system with New York City public schools. The topic is very much at the heart of this issue of *Early College Folio*, which takes that founding work in New York City two decades ago as one of the inspirational “Milestones” in the Early College Movement.

That 20th anniversary was an anniversary for me as well, for my career as a full-time educator began at that historical moment. I was truly in the right place at the right time. In the summer of 2001, I had just been hired by Bard College at Simon’s Rock as a faculty member in Chinese language and Asian studies, but I was still living in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, a few minutes’ walk from the original location of the original Bard High School Early College. I was asked to delay my move to Great Barrington and Simon’s Rock by a year to be a founding faculty member of Bard’s newest initiative in Early College. From that (ad)venture grew a series of BHSEC campuses, now collectively part of Bard Early College. To be in the audience for the commemoration 20 years later, sitting in a row with longtime colleagues so important to the Early College Movement, was a great honor for me.

The ceremony included speeches and presentations by some of the key figures spanning these 20 years of milestone educational innovation in New York City:

Bard College President and Bard Early College founder Leon Botstein, CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodriguez, NYC Department of Education Chancellor David Banks, BHSEC Manhattan graduate and now Bard Early College Board of Governors member Glendean Hamilton Stewart, and current BHSEC Queens college Year 1 student Aarsha Joshi. Stephen Tremaine, Executive Director of Bard Early College, gave an illustrated presentation on the histories of the Bard Early Colleges and CUNY's Early College work, a presentation Tremaine prepared with Andrea Soonachan, CUNY University Dean for K-16 Initiatives. Even as someone who had experienced many of these historic moments as they were happening, I learned a great deal from Soonachan and Tremaine's encapsulation of 20 years of achievements. I very much enjoyed the opportunity to learn from them that day, and I thought our *Early College Folio* readers would as well. Thank you to Stephen and Andrea for sharing their presentation deck with us for publication.

DR. JOHN WEINSTEIN is the Provost and Vice President of Bard Academy and Bard College at Simon's Rock. He previously served as founding faculty of the first Bard High School Early College in New York City, where he established the programs in Chinese language and in theater; as Faculty in Chinese and Asian Studies at Simon's Rock, as well as Director the Writing and Thinking program and Emily H. Fisher Faculty Fellow; on the founding team of Bard High School Early College Newark, first as Dean of the Early College and later as Principal; and as Dean of the Early Colleges for Bard College. A scholar focusing on modern Chinese and Taiwanese theater and performance, he edited and co-translated the book *Voices of Taiwanese Women: Three Contemporary Plays*, and has authored numerous chapters and articles. He is a leading authority of liberal arts early college education in both private and public contexts, and he trains teachers in early college pedagogy within and beyond the Bard Network.



Celebrating 20 Years of Early College in NYC



Bard Early College

**20 years ago, the nation's first
public, early college high schools
launched here in NYC.**

Those pathbreaking schools set in
motion a national movement - one in
which NYC remains a leader.

The Early College Model

Early colleges are public high schools in which tuition-free, credit-bearing college study begins as early as 9th grade.

NYC's early colleges are defined by their commitment to academic quality and to educational equity.

Early College in NYC

NYC is home to 22 Early College High Schools,
enrolling over 9,000 students each year



How the Early College Model Works



- Through partnerships between NYCDOE and a college partner, serious and supportive college study starts as early as 9th grade.
- Students earn transferable college credits and degrees, at no cost to the student or their family.
- Schools proactively reach out to students who are underrepresented in college completion.
- Robust socioemotional support and academic guidance ensure that every student has a real and rewarding head start on college study.

Impact in NYC

Over the past two decades, Bard and CUNY ECI have served **over 277,000 students**.

NYC's early colleges have had an extraordinary impact on educational access and equity:

At Bard NYC schools:

- 50% of current students are first-generation
- 73% are pell-eligible
- 67% are students of color
- 15% of students have an IEP

At CUNY ECI schools:

- 91% students of color
- 34% of all ECI students come from the lowest socioeconomic status
- 8.6% of students are English Language Learners
- 17.5% of students have an IEP



Impact in NYC

Over the past two decades, Bard and CUNY ECI have awarded **over 700,000 transferable, tuition-free college credits**. The early college model has a strong evidence base in NYC:

- According to an independent study, Bard graduates are nearly twice as likely as graduates of traditional high schools to earn a BA within four years, while controlling for academic and demographic characteristics.
- In 2020 The Education Trust found that the NYC Bard Early Colleges have the highest on-time bachelor's degree completion for low-income students of all public schools in NYS.



Impact in NYC

- For 2021 graduates, high school graduation rate across ECI schools was 92.9%, exceeding the NYC Department of Education average of 81.2%
 - 81.2% of 2021 ECI graduates enrolled in postsecondary education within six months of graduation
 - ECI graduates with college credit who go to CUNY have a four year BA completion rate 11% higher than non-ECI graduates.
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The Next 20 Years of Early College

The next generation of young people in NYC should have the opportunity to start college when they are ready, not when tradition dictates.

NYC continues to be a national leader in opening doors of opportunity to college and career at a younger age.
